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ABSTRACT

Using 1989-90 Pennsylvania Department of Education Section 353 Special Demonstration Project funding, Fayette County Community Action Education Center students produced a booklet that includes biographies and photographs of successful program alumni. The booklet describes events in people's lives that contributed to their being undereducated and the steps they took to learn to read or obtain a General Educational Development degree. Students participated in the production of the books as part of class assignments, and they were also involved in the dissemination of the booklet throughout the county. (A copy of the booklet is included.) (KC)

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# FAYETTE COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION SUCCESS BOOKLET

ED324477

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Report from fiscal year: July 1, 1989 to June 30, 1990

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Appendix A.....Success Booklet

## ABSTRACT

Utilizing 1989/90 Pennsylvania Department of Education Section 353 Special Demonstration Project funding, Fayette County Community Action Agency, Inc. (FCCAA) Education Center (CAEC) students produced a Success Booklet that includes biographies and photographs of successful CAEC alumni. The Success Booklet describes events in people's lives that contributed to their being undereducated and the steps they took to learn to read or obtain a GED. It was anticipated that distribution of the booklet throughout the community would increase volunteer recruitment and encourage other undereducated adults to enroll in adult education classes.

An added benefit was the participation of 1989/90 CAEC GED students in the actual production of the publication. As class assignment, adult students selected successful alumni, photographed and wrote biographies, designed the booklet layout and studied printing techniques. Students were also involved in the dissemination of the booklet throughout the county.

## INTRODUCTION

The Fayette County Community Action Education Center (CAEC) 1989/90 Special Demonstration Success Booklet Project had two primary goals; the first being the enhancement of CAEC GED curricula with a student developed publication containing interviews and photographs of outstanding CAEC students. The second goal resulted from the dissemination of the booklet throughout the county, thereby increasing recruitment of both adult students and volunteers.

Fayette County Community Action (FCCAA) recognizes that success stories compiled of statewide successful adult learners is a good outreach tool. Yet, demographics of Fayette County contrast the primarily urban and rural communities of the Commonwealth usually represented in the State booklet. Also, Fayette County has a large population of generationally welfare dependent families and dislocated workers who generally do not respond to traditional recruitment methods. FCCAA proposed that a success booklet composed of local successful adult learners would be of greater value as an outreach tool than one composed of people who have vastly different ethnic, social and cultural backgrounds.

Furthermore, FCCAA often utilizes hands-on, tangible, results oriented projects such as the success booklet in CAEC classes. The production of the success booklet allowed adult students to witness first hand activities related to publication, including essay writing, photography, editing, wordprocessing and printing.

Upon notification of funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, CAEC GED instructors began planning the curriculum for the success booklet. Essay writing is an important component of the GED test and is taught to every CAEC GED student. Teachers examined various ways to incorporate journalism, photojournalism, word processing and basic desktop publishing activities into essay writing instruction.

In October, 1989, CAEC GED teachers, (Melanie Bryte & Bruce Cornes) introduced the success booklet as a group project. Students immediately began selecting prospective successful alumni and students and preparing for interviews. Interviews and photographs were completed by March, 1990 and the final quarter of the project was spent in designing the layout of the booklet and preparing for printing and distribution.

The Success Booklet was developed by the CAEC GED students aided by instruction and guidance by the GED teachers, Bruce Cornes and Melanie Bryte. Both Mr. Cornes and Miss Bryte possess bachelor's degrees and are certified to teach in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. All CAEC programs are supervised by the FCCAA Director of Education, Linda Robb.

This report which outlines the techniques used to bring the booklet to fruition will be most useful to adult education providers considering alternative outreach techniques in their communities.

Permanent copies of this report and the Success Booklet will be held on file for the next five years with the following agencies:

Division of Adult Basic and Literacy Education Programs
PA Department of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

AdvancE
PDE Resource Center/VEIN
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It is well agreed upon that one of the most difficult aspects of adult education is getting the undereducated adult into the classroom. For the adult, he must first admit that being

undereducated or illiterate is a problem "that can be solved." Most adult learners testify that taking the first step was the hardest part about going back to school. For adult education providers, identifying undereducated adults can be very frustrating. Traditional newspaper and radio advertising often is unread or overlooked by the undereducated adult. Supporting this is that an overwhelming majority of CAEC students are referred by friends and relatives. FCCAA then proposed that publicizing successful graduates who are known in the community would be similar to word-of-mouth recruitment.

Many textbook series are available to the adult education provider and, like the majority, FCCAA uses Contemporary, Steck Vaughn, and Cambridge. However, a need exists to continually provide materials to enhance textbook work. CAEC instructors often develop teacher made materials and group projects that increase interest, motivation and employment readiness. The CAEC Success Booklet met that need by exposing GED students to group cooperation, interviewing techniques, essay writing, word processing, and publication.

## GOALS/OBJECTIVES

The 1989/90 Section 353 Special Demonstration Project: the CAEC Success Booklet had two objectives:

* to enhance the CAEC GED 1989/90 curricula with the production of a student project - a booklet containing personal interviews and photographs of outstanding successful CAEC students, and;

* to disseminate 2,500 copies of the booklet throughout the County as an outreach tool to solicit reluctant learners.

## PROCEDURES

The CAEC GED instructors first introduced basic journalism techniques beginning with the five w's to students during their scheduled essay writing classes. The five w's which must be included in every news story include who, what, where, when and why. Students studied biographies and interviews printed in newspaper and magazines. Students began practice by writing stories about themselves and then by interviewing and writing stories about classmates, family members or friends. As with all essay writing exercises, students were expected to submit articles that have been typed on the CAEC computers. These stories were shared with the class. Students then discussed how to make their stories more interesting by using quotes, active verbs and powerful lead sentences.

The GED instructor then established the criteria from which to choose students and alumni for inclusion in the success booklet. Participants did not have to be well known in the community; however, they did have to have successfully obtained their GED and have a personal history that could serve as a role model for reluctant learners. In addition to the current class of GED graduates, the students reviewed profiles of past GED graduates. By an electoral process, the students selected twelve people to be interviewed for the booklet. Teams of two were sent to interview the alumni. Resulting stories were shared with the class, critiqued and edited for final copy.

As part of the GED science component, GED instructor Bruce Cornes, an amateur photographer, introduced the science of photography. Students learned the basic process of black and white photography and functions of a 35 mm camera. Although two participants were not available for photograph, the remaining ten had their portraits taken by GED students.

The GED students studied the basic principles of publication layout and design. The students designed a cover and prepared the publication to send to the printer. 2,880 copies were

printed and the students began distribution to senior centers, shopping areas, health and human service facilities, and low income housing projects.

## CONCLUSION

FCCAA met both objectives of creating the success booklet and disseminating it into the community. The GED students who worked on the project benefitted greatly. Essay writing and science studies were reinforced and enhanced in an interesting manner. Students took pride in the cooperation and completion of a major project and were motivated to continue their studies through discussion with successful GED alumni that faced the same struggles that the student is facing now. Students also volunteered time to help distribute the booklet into the community.

CAEC staffing is limited primarily to instruction activities within the classroom. FCCAA was dependent upon student volunteers to distribute the booklets. Not all of the 2,880 booklets have been given out. Approximately half remain; however, they continue to be distributed weekly.

Students were evaluated for work assigned. The stories about themselves, their peers and the success booklet participants were graded as regular essay writing assignments. Students were not graded for volunteer time spent distributing the booklets; however, notations were made in the students' permanent records that will be relayed to prospective employers or schools seeking references regarding the students.

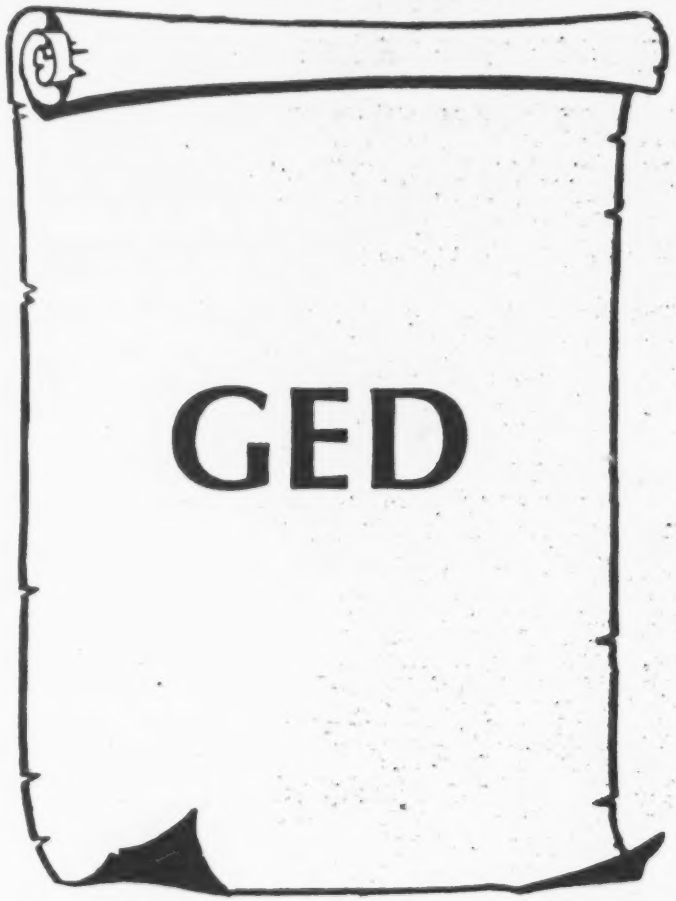
Due to the recency of the distribution of the booklet, FCCAA is not able to adequately evaluate its success in recruiting new students. However, initial reports are positive and standard intake and testing procedures include questioning the student as to how he found out about the program and what motivated him to come to the CAEC. FCCAA maintains documentation on all outreach activities and their success in reaching the public, not only in

the CAEC but also for the FCCAA Women, Infants and Children's program; the Housing Opportunities Project; Specialized Transportation; Food Resources; Information and Referral; and Aging Programs. FCCAA has provided programs for over 30,000 low income, disabled and elderly Fayette County residents annually since 1966.

A P P E N D I X "A"

Success Booklet

# 1990



# GED

# SUCCESS BOOKLET

# FAYETTE COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION EDUCATION CENTER

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# GED SUCCESS BOOKLET

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JUNE 30, 1990

# FAYETTE COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY, INC.

***People Helping People . . .***

## *If You Need Help Or Want To Further Your Education CALL 626-1070*

Funded in part by
The Pennsylvania Department of Education
and the
Department of Community Affairs

## *Glada Bierer*

"The GED was no problem once I made up my mind that I wanted to continue my education." This is what Glada said, "I had five children and some marital problems, I knew I didn't stand a chance without a diploma."

After she finished her GED she had some difficulties — her home burned down. This didn't stop her though. She has just finished her Administration of Justice Degree and she is on her way.

GLADA BIERER

## *Tammy Fosbrink*

TAMMY FORBRINK

Tammy said she wasn't very smart to drop out of school and get married at age fifteen. If she had it to do over again she would stay in school and get her diploma.

But, with perserverance she passed her GED exam and feels really good about it. She hopes that her husband will decide to go back to school and get his.

Her goals are to get some more education and finally get a good job — something that was impossible without a degree.

She says to tell everyone that has dropped out of school to "get it in gear and get your GED. It really pays off."

## *Margaret Booker*

Because Margaret felt that she knew more than her teachers and that school was a waste of time, she dropped out. She says, "I missed out on a lot, an education, school activities, the prom and most important graduation." A close friend helped Margaret realize that she needed an education. Pregnant and with two children at home she started GED classes. After getting her GED, Margaret began taking classes at Penn State University. In May of 1991 she will graduate with an Associate Degree in Business Administration and a certificate as an Administrative Secretary.

MARGARET BOOKER

## *Jesse Lowery*

JESSE LOWERY

For Jesse, returning to school after such a long time was difficult. Since walking in and out of the GED classroom, Jesse has been able to walk in and out of two other schools. He has obtained a certificate from North Fayette Vo-Tech School for a computer science class and an Associate's Degree in Electrical Maintenance from Triangle Tech. When talking to young people, Jesse encouraged them to stay in school or return to get their GED. Presently, Jesse is looking for a job that will utilize his education.

## *Patty Barnhart*

Patty dropped out of school because she got married. She came back to get her GED because she wanted to better herself and feel more confident about herself. She says now that she has received her GED she feels a lot better about herself. Patty plans to go to nursing school or computer school. She tells anyone who doesn't have a high school diploma to obtain a GED. Because of her gratitude, Patty has voiced a willingness to help the GED program in any way.

PATTY BARNHART

WILMA DAVIS

## *Wilma Davis*

Coming from a dysfunctional family, Wilma was eager to marry. As a result she dropped out of school at age 15. Mrs. Rupp, a concerned case-worker, urged Wilma to get her GED. Following Mrs. Rupp's suggestions, Wilma found Community Action's GED program. After getting her GED, Wilma became a certified Laubach tutor for Community Action's Literacy Program. Then, she studied nursing and graduated from Fayette County Vocational Technical School of Practical Nursing. Although she did not have much community involvement while attending school, now that she has graduated she intends to focus on literacy tutoring.

## *Betty Vanorsdale*

Betty has had many difficulties in her life, including a heart condition. Betty dropped out of school because of poverty in her family. She said that her husband, Bob, was the reason she returned to school to get her GED. She hopes to further her education by attending college or a business school. Along with taking care of her family, Betty helps the elderly in the community. She is a remarkable woman and a great inspiration.

BETTY VANORSDALE

BOB VANORSDALE

## *Bob Vanorsdale*

Bob is truly a success story. He dropped out of school because he had low self-esteem. He says that he felt stupid because he didn't know how to read. After the closing of Volkswagen, Bob knew he needed a high school diploma if he wanted to get a good job. That was when Bob enrolled in the Literacy Program at Community Action. Over several years, Bob made remarkable progress. He went from Literacy to Adult Basic Education and ended in the Job Training Partnership Program. Now that he has his GED, he hopes to find a permanent job. Bob is actively involved with helping the elderly in the community. He urges anyone that needs help in reading to ASK. He says, "you will feel so good about yourself."

## *Charles Redman, Jr.*

Charles dropped out of high school because he was bored and felt that he could find challenges in the real world. When Charles first decided to come back to school for his GED it was because his father and mother wanted him to receive a high school equivalency diploma. But, by the time Charles finished, it was because HE wanted his GED. He says, "I'm glad I did it, because I'm proud and for the first time I did something on my own." As for community service, Charles is serving not only his community but his country in the United States Army. This past December, he graduated from basic training and in March 1990 he finished an AIT training course and now he is a certified food service specialist. He is currently training for Airborne Paratrooper and he hopes to make Staff Sergeant in two years.

CHARLES REDMAN, JR.

DIANA RICE

## *Diana Rice*

Diana dropped out of school because she was bored and thought she would be happier working at her parents bakery. She loved the idea of making money instead of sitting in the classroom. After Diana got married, she quit her job to take care of her baby boy, Justin. When Justin was 6 months old she once again got bored with staying home. Her husband suggested that she return to school and receive her GED. She now hopes to attend California University of PA and major in Early Childhood Education.

## *Shirley Chambers*

Shirley, as most A.B.E. students, dropped out of school early. She did so because of illness.

After 33 years she decided she wanted to get a job, but for the job she wanted she needed an education. So, she decided to start GED classes. Not only did she start, but she started with the right attitude, "keep on plugging until I get what I want". With hard work and this attitude she ended up with excellent grades.

Her plans now are to get a good job with good wages and a future.

Shirley is active in the church and community. She says that she enjoyeds every bit of her schooling and plans to promote the GED program in the future.

SHIRLEY CHAMBERS

JODY KNOPSNIDER

## *Jody Knopsnider*

Jody's reasons for getting her GED were quite brief. She quit school to take care of children whose mother had passed away.

She got her GED so she could begin secretarial school.

She wants some security for her older years.

Nuff said!

# *Yesterday . . .*
# *Today and Tomorrow*

There are two days in every week about which we should not worry, two days which should be kept free from fear and apprehension.

One of these days is YESTERDAY with its mistakes and cares, its faults and blunders, its aches and pains. YESTERDAY has passed forever beyond our control.

All the money in the world cannot bring back YESTERDAY. We cannot undo a single act we perform; we cannot erase a single word we said. YESTERDAY is gone.

The other day we should not worry about is TOMORROW with its possible adversities, its burdens, its large promise and poor performance. TOMORROW is also beyond our immediate control.

TOMORROW'S sun will rise, either in splendor or behind a mask of clouds — but it will rise. Until it does, we have no stake in TOMORROW, for it is as yet unborn.

This leaves only one day — TODAY — Any man can fight the battles of just one day. It is only when you and I add the burdens of those two awful eternities — YESTERDAY and TOMORROW that we break down.

It is not the experience of TODAY that drive men mad — it is remorse or bitterness for something which happened YESTERDAY and the dread of what TOMORROW may bring.

Let us, therefore live but one day at a Time.

Yesterday is a Cancelled Check,

Tomorrow a Promissory Note,

But TODAY is CASH, Spend It Wisely.

*Sponsored by*
*Fayette County Community Action Agency, Inc.*

Connellsville Community Center
201 East Fairview Avenue
Connellsville, PA 15425
(412) 626-1070

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